

From: Michael Backes
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Comments

To Whom It May Concern,

I feel that the U.S. Government needs to act decisively to curb Microsoft's abuse of its monopoly power in the software marketplace. I have suffered because of Microsoft's actions in the marketplace in the following ways:

- 1.) Microsoft slavishly copies the innovations of other smaller companies, such as Apple Computer's Macintosh operating system, effectively co-opting these innovations, and therefore making it difficult for the smaller company's innovations to be rewarded through increased sales and developer support. This means that Microsoft has unfairly impeded Apple's ability to compete, which has resulted in fewer software applications being developed for Apple's MacOS. Each time that Apple releases a new version of their Macintosh operating system, Microsoft seems to copy the new features of the MacOS into its own Windows operating system. Microsoft seems to hold Apple hostage, since Microsoft's Office applications are so crucial to the survival of the MacOS, that if Microsoft decided to kill development of their MacOS products, it could very well spell the death of the Macintosh in the marketplace. That seems completely unfair and anti-competitive.
- 2.) Microsoft seeks to extend its monopoly into other areas, by leveraging its monopoly on the PC to give it an unfair advantage in other markets. Microsoft's development of an internet browser seems to have marginalized other browsers to the point where no other company will enter the market. Microsoft is currently attempting to dominate the videogame business through the release of its Xbox videogame console. Two of the videogames that I hoped to buy and that had been announced for competing platforms, have been canceled because of Microsoft's actions. HALO, the most anticipated game for the Macintosh, was canceled because Microsoft bought the company that was developing HALO for the Macintosh and made the game exclusive to the Xbox for the foreseeable future. Shenmue II, a game made by Sega, was cancelled for release on Sega's own Dreamcast, because Microsoft bought the rights to release it exclusively on the Xbox.

I think the only fair solution to curbing Microsoft's abuse is to force Microsoft to spinoff their Internet, videogame, and application business units from their operating system business. The world will be a much better place for if such a split were to be enforced by our government. It would help our economy, because it would encourage thousands of software developers to bring new, innovative products to market. Please be brave and make the decision to curb Microsoft's abuse of their monopoly power.

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